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THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
178
OWN WITNESS.

R. Clay, Printer, Bread-street-hill, Doctors' Commons.

THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

ITS
OWN WITNESS.

An Argument to prove the Identity
of the Church of England with the
ancient British and Apostolic Church
in *Locality of Jurisdiction, Form of*
Government, and Institution of Doc-
trine.

THE DEDUCTION

From this Argument is to shew, that
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
IS NOT A SEPARATION FROM
THE CHURCH OF ROME,
Nor an ARBITRARY CREATION ;
But the AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF CHRISTIANITY,
And
The *only* NATIONAL FORM
In which it can be recognized and administered by the STATE.

BY
BRITANNICUS.

NITI VERITATE.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON :
J. G. & F. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, & WATERLOO PLACE.
MDCCCXXXV.

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The Rev. ———, Vicar of ———.



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND A NATIONAL BLESSING.

"Religion is not one of those articles, the supply of which may be left to be regulated by the demand. The necessity for it, is precisely greatest when the demand is least,—and a government neglects its first and highest duty, which fails to provide for the spiritual, as well as temporal, wants of its subjects."—*Hamilton's America.*

"In justice to the *established clergy* of the realm, I cannot but remark the great advance which they have exhibited during the last half century. They have gone forth in numbers, rekindling the lamp of heavenly truth, where before it burned with a dim and sickly ray. They have explored and cultivated many a neglected spot, *into which other labourers could not*, for obvious reasons, *gain admission* with equal facilities of influence. And far be it from any of their dissenting brethren, to regard their success with any other than a *holy jealousy*, a *godly emulation*."—*Robert Hall.*

"Itaque sapienter admodum antiqui legum conditores ut efferatos agresti vita aut malitiâ, populorum animos mitigarent et ad mansuetudinem ac justitiam traducerent Deorum primum metum iis injiciendum esse rati sunt."—*Cicero.*

THE rampant spirit of the levelling principle not only stamps in its fury upon the institutions of man, but attempts the MAJESTY OF HEAVEN, and strikes at the institutions of God. There is no measure to its audaciousness. It owns no moral directory. Right and wrong are words not found in its vocabulary. Its own perverse and obstinate will is the sole measure of its acts. It may be granted without injury to the general truth of these observations, that there are degrees of strength and vitality in this *unprincipled* principle; but after every allowance and exception has been made, its essential character remains—its tendency is to OVERTHROW and DESTROY.

It has already trampled upon a portion of our civil glory, and made its voice to be heard above law and justice; and it is now proceeding to lay its unhallowed hands on the religious establishment of the country. But in this respect, it will be no easy task to accomplish its purposes. Moral order and intelligence are strong barriers; and the protection of the Almighty is a wall of adamant. He that touches the altar with an *intention* to injure it comes into unequal contest with the God *that* altar is

intended to honour. The struggle, however, is fast approaching. Let us prepare for it with all decency. Let us put on the breast-plate of justice, and with the weapons of reason and truth let us defend the sacred citadel to the last.

The Church of England might, perhaps, once be denominated the *Established Church*, as it respects the acknowledgment and support afforded her by LAW; in this sense the epithet can no longer be just; she is not more established than the various forms of dissent which surround her; and in whose favour, that is, in the maintenance of their rights, the law acts as strongly and *impartially*. It is indeed the only religion *directly* acknowledged by the State; but not *exclusively*. The offices of the State are thrown open to all, almost without exception. The "oath of a Christian"—not the test of churchmanship—is the sole standard of eligibility. *Established Church*, therefore, as it regards the Church of England, as an exclusive religion, is no longer applicable. Nay, I will go farther, and assert, that the *strict* union between the Church and State, as it is generally understood, is dissevered and broken, inasmuch as others are admitted into state offices. There is a sense, however, in which it is proper it should be asserted, and which is, indeed, the main object of the following argument. I know the objection that may be made to the above assertion. The king is the head of the Church; and whilst that continues the union will exist. This is not sufficient. The king is acknowledged as a high and sacred Personage as it respects his office, but not as the *spiritual* head of the Church: this is not pretended. He is head over "all matters ecclesiastical, as well as civil;" but he is not more the head of the matters of the Church of England, than of the matters of dissent. Where matters of law arise amongst them, they must appeal to his courts; witness the late proceedings in the King's Court of Chancery, in the case of the Tottenham-court Road Chapel. But, it may be said, in the Church of England he appoints spiritual officers. If, by this, is meant the appointment of bishops, it may be answered, he does not *order* bishops; he only appoints the place of their residence and ministration. But even this was an intrusion of the crown as far as it affects the elevation of an individual to the office of a bishop—as well as some other things which the king in council *may* do—brought in by the almost necessary circumstances of the times; a necessity which can no longer exist. It will be sufficient here to say, that the king is not, in the true sense of the word, the head of the Church of England—a point we shall be prepared more fully to discuss in a subsequent paper. The Church of England is not a mere state religion. She is the *representative* of Christianity, and the *national* dispenser of it. Through her, the Ruler shows his respect and regard for religion. This will be important in our future inquiry.

If it be objected: The Church of England is endowed by the State, and is, therefore, the State religion, the objection is not granted to be valid. It is not endowed by the State. The facts of history are the ground of my assertion. The Church of England has been endowed by the munificence of kings—the religious zeal of private individuals, or the bounty of corporate bodies. In the same way all other public foundations derive their emoluments. The hospital, the alms-house, the grammar-school, derive their origin from the same sources. The tenure of the

Church's property is not different from that of any other. The foundation of Guy's Hospital is not to be regarded as more sacred than the Church of St. Mary's, Leicester, nor the revenues of Earl Grey held by a surer title than those of St. Paul's. I question whether the noble earl can show the *original* title-deed by which he holds his estate ; but whether St. Paul's can show the original document or not, the venerable Dean can point to its lofty dome as a commanding proof of it. There are a great many dissenting places of worship that enjoy endowments. Their colleges are endowed. I can see no difference in the character of these endowments and those of the Church of England. In a late instance, one class of Dissenters has manifested a very proper anxiety to reclaim from the Socinians, in furtherance of their own peculiar system, an *endowment* of 3,000*l.* a year. We do not blame them for this. We only ask for equal justice. We shall make important use of this afterwards. What I want now, is to show that the Church is not the "creature" of the State. Her endowments are not from the State, and the State CANNOT dispose of them.

But then (it is a most astounding objection !) they have no such religious institutions in America : very well. Will the *babblers* go on to say : " ergo," We ought not to endure them in England ? But let us first hear from Mr. Hamilton, how they get on in America without a religious establishment.

" In the country, differences of religious opinion rend society into shreds and patches, varying in every thing of colour, form, and texture. In a village, the population of which is barely sufficient to fill one church, and support one clergyman, the inhabitants are either forced to want religious ministration altogether, or the followers of different sects must agree on some compromises, by which each yields up some portion of his creed to satisfy the objections of his neighbour. This breeds argument, disputes, and bitterness of feeling. . . . But who is to inculcate such a jumble of discrepant and irreconcilable doctrine ? No one can shape his doctrine according to the anomalous and pie-bald creed prescribed by such a congregation ; and the practical result is, that some one sect becomes victorious for a time ; jealousies deepen into antipathies ; and what is called an '*opposition church*,' probably springs up in the village. Still harmony is not restored. The rival clergymen attack each other from the pulpit ; *newspapers* are enlisted on either side ; and *religious* warfare is waged with the bitterness, if not the learning, which has distinguished the controversies of abler polemics."

And this is the state of things which has been the theme of such unmeasured eulogy from the infidel and revolutionary party, all over the world ! Certainly it is very much to be lamented that England should be in possession of such peculiar religious privileges, and highly desirable that she should immediately resign them,—because the United States are not so distinguished !!!

This, no doubt, is a benevolent suggestion ; but we are not so easily to be duped. We have no objection to be privileged above the United States. We wish them as well as ourselves ; but we are not so void of selfishness, as to will ourselves reduced to their level. But we have not yet done with America. The Seventh Report of the American Tract Society, thus states the overwhelming deficiency of *religious* instruction—

" Ministers of the Gospel to supply the destitute millions of our country are not to be found. The census of 1820 extended, within a fraction, over 600,000 square miles ; if from this, we deduct 60,000, embracing a portion of the country where the privileges of the gospel are most richly enjoyed, we have remaining 540,000 square miles of inhabited country, embracing probably nine millions of our population, and more than one half of these (five millions) without a stated evangelical ministry."

This melancholy fact speaks volumes ; and will suffice instead of a thousand arguments in answer to the advocates of the voluntary system.

We consider the Church of England as the great and paramount blessing of the land. To every, the most remote village in the kingdom, it conveys the most substantial benefits ; and where the *living truths of the gospel in accordance with its formularies are promulgated*, it is one of the most perfect systems under heaven, for promoting the real welfare of man ; and, under all circumstances, it secures to the village poor, a kind and sympathizing friend—a disinterested guide, and a liberal benefactor. Our villages are not more adorned by the grey-stone church, than by the decent parsonage, where dwell content and virtue, intellectual attainment and charity.

The idle assertions of speculative men, who insist that rulers have nothing to do with religion in the way of furtherance, have been sufficiently refuted. But suppose their suggestion to be acted upon, and the instrumentality of the national Church to be withdrawn, from the parishes where it is now exerted, what would be the state of many hundred poor and populous districts in this country ? The population would become semi-barbarous and heathen. In the flourishing and crowded cities, no doubt, men of talent would meet with encouragement, and ample stipends would be found to encourage and support them ; but in the retired hamlets and in the numberless poor and populous villages this would be impossible, and they would be left utterly destitute of those blessings which, under the present system, they enjoy.

But Dissenters do not always discourage the interference of rulers in supporting religion. The advocates of the voluntary system in England, in a warmer clime, speak in other terms ; *i. e.* in the language of common sense. The missionaries of the *London Missionary Society* thus address themselves to the *Regent of Huahine*—" God has placed you here as king, in a station of the highest honour, and most extensive usefulness. Here you have great influence ; and *that* influence you employ largely for His glory, and for the benefit of your people. Here you are a nursing father, and Hautia Vahine is a nursing mother, to the Church. Here you are a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well. In no other place could you do so much good by authority, by precept, by persuasion, and by example, in the exercise of that power and those talents with which you have been invested."—*Tyerman and Bennet*, Vol. I. p. 137. We find no fault with this ; but we are of opinion that King William IV. and Queen Adelaide are entitled to equal honour, and quite as capable of affording protection to the Christian Church as the king and queen of Huahine.

The spoilers of Britain, who would interfere with the workings of this benign institution, are the **ROBBERS OF THE POOR**. For in the

highest and fullest sense of the word, the Church of England may be denominated the PATRIMONY OF THE POOR.

Will any in his right mind say, that such a vast and extensive apparatus of religious means—the affording and enjoying of a scriptural liturgical mode of offering divine worship, and of giving instruction from heaven *in every parish in England and Wales every Sabbath-day*; the placing of well-educated, and as the Church itself always designs it should be, pious, and benevolent, and industrious clergymen, throughout the country, commissioned, authorized, and enjoined to give advice and consolation to the inquiring and the afflicted—the institution of Sabbath, and infant, and daily schools in their several parishes and hamlets, improving the clothing and other comforts of the village poor, and becoming the medium of a civilizing and salutary intercourse between the opulent and the indigent—the setting up of lending libraries for the instruction of the population, and a supervision of their circumstances by the clergyman and his family, and his constant residence in the parsonage-house, to which the poorest cottager may resort for advice and comfort in his greatest extremity—the spending in charitable hospitality, and in acts of kindness among their people, of much private property by hundreds of clergymen, who receive but little for their parochial services: thus using a daily influence among a village population in promoting brotherly love, and allaying discontents; and all this in the spirit of religion, and in setting a good example of practice and doctrine before the people, and preaching to them in the church, and giving cottage lectures in the week, in distant hamlets—teaching the doctrines of repentance toward God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, obedience to his will, and happiness laid up for believers in heaven:—*

Is there a man endued with understanding, or blessed with a moral conscience, who would put a check to such a dispensation of mercy flowing into every corner of the land? Is there a man, who from any mercenary motive, or vain affectation of reform, would endanger the working of such a benevolent system? Whether he be in office, or out of office, let him reflect upon the responsibility he would incur, and not be “fool” enough, in such a momentous concern, to “lean to his own understanding.”

I leave the motto at the head of this article to speak for itself, and to stand as an argument with those who are inclined to admit it. I shall proceed to higher ground, and shew the right of the Church of England to the places she occupies, not as derived from LAW, or CUSTOM, or ENDOWMENT, but from her own peculiar PREROGATIVE, in which no other religion can share with her.

* Watkins.

THE APOSTOLIC INSTITUTION AND ANCIENT INDEPENDENCE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

PROVING THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND WITH THE ANCIENT BRITISH APOSTOLIC CHURCH IN LOCALITY OF JURISDICTION.

The design of the following article is to show the priority of the Church of England to the PAPAL Church of Rome, and its independence of that Church—and the writer entertains a strong opinion, that he could show, from indubitable proof, that the Church of England was established by *Apostolic men* PRIOR to the *Church of Rome* itself; from whence it would follow that the Church of Rome, so far from being the root, is a YOUNGER BRANCH than the CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

"We see her not only an Apostolical and Independent, but also a PROTESTANT CHURCH,"—*Bishop Burgess*.

"We reckon it every way just, that we should search out the custom of the primitive Church, and make use of the custom, when fairly ascertained, in helping the decision of a litigated question. We admit the possibility, that the Church may have been mistaken, and that its custom must not, therefore, be adduced as bringing with it the weight of a divine institution; but we contend for the very high probability, so high as to amount within an hair's breadth of certainty, that the customs of the Church, while the echoes at least of the teaching of Apostles were still heard within her walls, were precisely such as Apostles either instituted or sanctioned. And we hold, therefore, that the proof of early custom on the side of a practice, is the same thing as bringing an almost irresistible argument in support of the rightness of that practice."—*Melvill*.

BEFORE I proceed to establish my main position with respect to the Church of England, it will be necessary, in the fullest manner, to examine a position which is very generally alleged, and too frequently assented to—that *the Church of England owes her existence to Popery*. I shall confine myself, in the following observations, to this inquiry; and as I shall with the strictest regard to truth, adduce nothing but allowed and unrefutable authority, I hope to set this matter at rest; and to show, that the Church of England was not only established before popery existed—but that her Institution is independent of the *Roman Church* altogether; and that, whatever authority that Church may have exercised over the Church of England, has been founded on USURPATION.

There can now be little question, that CHRISTIANITY was preached in Britain by St. Paul, between the years A. D. 58, and A. D. 68. The evidence of this fact, collected from the writings of the ancient British Ecclesiastical historians, and of the primitive Christian fathers, by Bishop Stillingfleet, Archbishops Usher and Parker, and the present Bishop of Salisbury, is nearly demonstrative. But as the fact is not necessary for my present purpose, I shall content myself with the mention of it.

We are assured by Gildas the Wise, our most ancient British historian who flourished about thirteen hundred years ago, that Christianity was introduced into Britain before the defeat of Boadicea. which event occurred A. D. 61. I would willingly quote the words of Gildas, but the

paragraph would be too long for my present limits. St. Paul suffered martyrdom in the year 68 or 69, and Clemens, his "fellow-labourer,"* in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, speaks of St. Paul preaching "even to the utmost bounds of the west," a term which includes Britain, according to every authority, both ancient and modern.†

I shall also pass over, for the sake of brevity, the historical accounts of King Lucius, which refer to the second century, and shall content myself with quoting the testimony of Tertullian, who flourished A. D. 192, and of Origen, who lived A. D. 230. The former, in his treatise against the Jews (c. vii.), relates that—

"The extremities of Spain, the various people of Gaul, the *parts of Britain inaccessible to the Romans*, had received the religion of Christ."

Whilst Origen, in his sixth homily upon the first chapter of St. Luke, observes :—

"The divine goodness of our God and Saviour is equally diffused amongst the *Britons*, the Africans, and other nations of the world."

The authority is abundant to show, that from this period, the Church of England was greatly enlarged and consolidated; inasmuch, as during the persecution of Dioclesian, which raged A. D. 300, England became the scene of martyrdom. Fuller has preserved the names of some of these early *Church of England* martyrs, amongst whom, we may commemorate JULIUS and AARON, two substantial citizens of Caerleon, and AUGULIUS, Bishop of London.‡

The Saxon invasion was now at hand; and those fierce and idolatrous hordes were employed from A. D. 449 to A. D. 582, in subjecting the island to their sway. The whole kingdom was divided amongst their chiefs, and the fanes of idolatry triumphed to a frightful extent, over the temples of Christianity. Its professors in many instances were reduced to the most cruel oppression—whilst the greater number of its bishops and clergy, fled into Wales or Scotland.

It was at this time, that Gregory, the Bishop of Rome, conceived the design of converting the English Saxons to Christianity; and for this end, despatched a band of Missionaries, at the head of which, was Augustine the monk, or St. Austin. I am obliged to omit many interesting particulars. They landed on the Isle of Thanet, A. D. 597; were favourably received by Ethelbert, king of Kent; and met with very considerable success in the conversion of the Saxons. The king himself was baptized, and his whole people followed his example. St. Austin's ambition was excited by his success, and he desired a conference with the *British Bishops* and Clergy, for the purpose of bringing them to a conformity with the *Church of Rome*, as well as for procuring to himself the acknowledgment of his appointment of archbishop, which had been conferred upon him by Gregory. Many interesting particulars connected with this conference are preserved by Bede, which our space will not allow us to quote. The British bishops and clergy reject the demands of St. Austin, and he threatens them with destruction. Austin

* Philip. iv. 3.

† Stillingfleet's *Antiq. of the British Churches* in his *Collected Works*; London, 1710, vol. iii. pp. 3, 4, and pp. 24, 25. Burgess's *Tracts on the Origin and Independence of the Ancient British Church*; London, 1816, p. 72.

‡ Church Hist. Cent. iv. p. 20.

shortly after died, but not before he had secured the accomplishment of his denunciation. For this purpose, Ethelfred, a king of the Anglo Saxons, had been put in motion, and at the head of a great army, attacked and overthrew the Britons at Carlegeon, the present *Chester*; at which time, TWELVE HUNDRED of the British clergy were massacred in cold blood !*

These circumstances, which are not inventions, but the solid FACTS of history, must prove, not only the existence of the Church of England before the coming of the Roman Missionaries, but its DISTINCTION and INDEPENDENCE.

But we have something further to advance. The Church of England was not *extinct* amongst the Saxons. Far from it. St. Kentigern preached Christianity to the Saxons in Cumberland. It is related of Gildas—"that the northern parts of Britain flocked to his preaching; and the Saxons, forsaking the errors of Gentilism, destroyed their idols, and were baptized into the Christian faith."† Cerdic, the king of the West Saxons, permitted the Britons, who were Christians, to live quietly under his government. The king of Wessex also permitted the inhabitants of Cornwall, by paying a small tribute, to enjoy the exercise of their religion. To which I shall only add the triumphant fact, on the authority of Bede, that *ETHELBERT himself was not unacquainted with the Christian religion; for Bertha, his queen, was a Christian; and brought to England, Luidhard, a French bishop, who preached to her and her court in the church of St. Martin's, Canterbury, for a length of time before St. Austin's arrival.* These facts are adduced to shew, that St. Austin did not find the ground unoccupied, but that there was a British episcopal church actually in existence amongst the Saxons. It appears also that Offa, the son of the king of Northumberland, was not only acquainted with the Gospel, but, prompted by his zeal, had become a missionary to the Germans.‡

There is a great deal more proof to the same purpose; but this is amply sufficient to show, that, so far from the Church of England owing its existence to Popery—not even the revival of Christianity amongst the heathen Saxons, is attributable solely to the labours of the Roman missionaries; but that many of the British fathers ardently engaged in the work, and that it was completed by a union of their labours. This intermingling of the members of the Roman and English Churches, must not be considered as detrimental to the scope of my argument, for two important reasons.

First, because Popery, in the strict sense of the word, was not yet established. "It is generally agreed," says Mosheim, "that Boniface engaged Phocas, that abominable tyrant, who waded to the imperial throne through the blood of the Emperor Mauritius, to confer upon the Roman Pontiff the title of *Universal Bishop*." But Boniface did not come to the bishopric of Rome till A. D. 604; and St. Austin, who came to England A. D. 597, died before the assumption of *Pope* or *Universal*

* Bædæ *Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ Gentis Anglorum*, lib. i. c. 27, p. 65; Interrog. 7, lib. ii. c. 2, p. 80.

† Two of the discourses of this ancient BRITISH bishop on the ruin of Great Britain, are still extant.

‡ Parker de *Vetustate Ecclesiæ Britannicæ*, p. 12.

Bishop, by Boniface. But should any super-refined objector, notwithstanding, intimate that the errors of the Roman Church were at this time sufficient to stamp it with the character of Antichrist, I answer,

Next, that it was not a VOLUNTARY subjection on the part of the Church of England; but, as we have seen, on the part of the Roman missionary, a barbarous and cruel USURPATION. It is true, indeed, after the slaughter of the TWELVE HUNDRED! that the Roman religion, with the errors of that and a subsequent day, became triumphant; yet it can never be regarded but as an unrighteous violation of all sacred principle. Many of the British Christians, as we have seen, remained amongst the idolatrous Saxons, and many of the bishops laboured successfully, in establishing the truths of their religion; but the *Papal* influence was too strong against them; and all was soon swallowed up in the vortex of Popish ambition; and it is painfully true that the Church of England continued under a long moral night, in the midst of increasing darkness, unheard-of impositions, abominable idolatries, and unparalleled crimes, till the Reformation. It is also worthy of PECULIAR NOTICE, that the Romish episcopacy, not many years after the death of Augustine the monk, became almost extinct; and that the Church of England was up-reared on the foundation of the ancient Scottish and British episcopacy.*

I have thus brought down the argument from the earliest date, in proof of the existence and ancient independence of the Church of England, which sufficiently demonstrates the identity of the present Church of England with the British and Apostolic Church as far as LOCALITY is concerned; but before I can establish the position at which I aim, I am aware it will be necessary for me to prove the UNITY of the Church of England in other respects, and that at the Reformation she abjected nothing *essential* to that *unity*. This I shall attempt in my next; and hope to shew, that in throwing off the tyranny and errors of the Romish Church, "it was more a transition than a creation," and that the Church of England came out, from the long night of usurpation, to shine in her own original LIGHT, and resume her ancient and PROPER authority.

The British public, I mean in the best sense of the word, is awakening to the necessity of making some grand effort for the salvation of every thing dear and valuable; and on every side, we hear the emphatic cry—"The Ark of our Faith shall not be abandoned." Let every Briton, whose heart beats *free* within his bosom, be determined to vindicate the rights of this ancient inheritance, which has descended to him from the earliest times; let him aspire to hand it down, unimpaired, to his posterity, and let him "first die," rather than be *himself*, in any way, the means of ignobly selling the best and dearest institution that God has given him, into the hands of the enemies of mankind. It would be impious and cowardly to desert his post, and abandon the best interests of his country; and it would be a relegation of all moral principles, to allow the *fends of anarchy*, and the *legion of infidelity*, to tear down the SACRED STANDARD, which has been unfurled since the days of *Caractacus*!†

* Vid. Lloyd's Historical Acct. Bede, Stillingsfleet, Jones, and Spelman.

† He was led captive to Rome by Ostorius, in the reign of Claudius, about A.D. 47.

**THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND WITH THE ANCIENT
BRITISH AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH IN FORM OF GOVERNMENT.**

The Government of the Church of England is **EPISCOPACY**, in which it agrees with the ancient British and Apostolical Church. The following passages, to which many others might be added, are from the works of *Saint Ignatius*, who was **BISHOP of Antioch thirty-six years during the life of St. JOHN.**

*Αἰδεῖσθε δὲ καὶ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ὑμῶν, ὡς χριστὸν καθ'
ἡμῶν οἱ μακάριοι διετάξαντο ἀπόστολοι.*

"See that ye reverence your **BISHOP**, as **CHRIST**, as the blessed apostles have given us commandment."

*Ὁ τιμῶν ἐπίσκοπον, ἀπὸ θεοῦ τετιμῆται. Ὁ λάθρα
ἐπισκοπούν τι πράσσει, τῷ διάβολῳ λατρεῖ.*

"Whoever honoureth the bishop is honoured of **GOD**. He that transacteth any thing without the privity of the bishop, ministers to the devil."

"We can prove, as we maintained, that in the Church founded by the apostles and their immediate successors, an episcopal government was always established; and that for nearly two hundred years no church was thought a true church which had not a bishop—an individual who was selected from the priests, superintending them, and possessing the power of enforcing certain offices, which no one of inferior rank performed. Such a bishop we declare Titus to have been, whom St. Paul left in Crete, that he might ordain elders in every city. And from the bishops ordained by the Apostle, we are ready to prove, by a series of historical documents, that our own bishops derive their authority to ordain ministers. A point which, however lost sight of or ridiculed in a day when men think no authority necessary, provided they have a little turn for public speaking, and can persuade themselves of an inward illumination, set up as preachers, and then call themselves ambassadors—this point, we say, of the apostolical succession of the ministry of our Church, is one of the weightiest that can be agitated in a Christian community. I could as soon believe that Christ is not the head of his Church, as believe that he has made no provision for a succession of ordained ministers; and unless this provision be found in an episcopal order, my firm conviction is, that it exists not on the broad face of the earth."—*Melville.*

HAVING, in my last Letter, established the apostolical existence, and ancient independence, of the Church of England, by which its *local* identity is secured, the next step of the argument is to shew, that the present Church of England is identical in its form and structure, with the British Church before the time of St. Austin; and that its unity has not been destroyed by the temporary usurpation of the Romish Church.

In order to accomplish this, it will be further necessary to substantiate two things—that the Church of England retains the same functional institution, or form of government; and, that she maintains the same doctrines. If these two points be clearly ascertained, all minor objections will be unworthy of any candid reasoner to offer, and will be allowed to vanish of themselves.

Without controversy, it will be granted, that the Church of England is, in her form of government, **EPISCOPAL**; by which is meant, that her religious administration is under the government of Bishops. This I take to be the *essential form* of the Church, and that which fixes its character, in prominent distinction from the various forms of religion which

surround her. Like the peaked and snowy top of Chimborazi amongst the mountains of the earth, so that Church rears her sacred and hoary head over the diversified forms of Christendom.

The form of government, then, in the Church of England is Episcopacy; and all that we have to do, at present, is to shew that the same form existed in the ancient British Church. Of course the proof of this is founded on historic evidence, to which, therefore, we must now refer.

The ancient records of the British Church, which have been collected by the authorities to which I have before alluded, and to which must now be added the name of Sir H. Spelman, inform us, that bishops have existed in the island from the earliest dawn of Christianity. We have the names of many, in a long continued succession, who have filled various bishoprics. I shall give, as a *literary curiosity*, the names of the *primitive* bishops of London and York. We begin with those of York; *Sampson*, about A. D. 170; *Eborius*, 314; *Taurinus*, appointed by Constantius Chlorus, 300; *Pyramus*, appointed by King Arthur, about 520; *Todiacus*, who fled into Wales, 586. Of London, the names of a greater number have been preserved: *Theanus*, about A. D. 170; his church was founded on the spot now occupied by St. Peter's, Cornhill; *Eleanus*, Cador, Obinus, Conan, *Palladius*, *Stephanus*, *Rutus*, *Theodwinus*, *Theodredus*, *Hilarius*, *Restitutus*, *Guilminus*, A. D. 435; *Fastidius*, who was a considerable writer, 420; *Vodinus*, 439, destroyed by means of Hengist, because he opposed the marriage of Vortigern with his daughter; *Theonus*, 553; fled into Wales, 586. Our limits will not allow us to give the names of the other bishops on record; we shall, therefore, content ourselves with mentioning the names of the three bishops who were delegated by the Church of England to attend the Council of Arles, in France, A. D. 314.* These were, *Eborius*, of York; *Restitutus*, of London; and *Adelfuis*, of Caerleon: and it may be mentioned in connexion with this historical fact, as an important corroborative proof of the agreement of the *ancient* with the *modern* British Church, that Bishop Adelfuis was accompanied in his mission by *Sacerdos*, a *priest*, and *Arminius*, a *deacon*. To conclude this portion of proof, I shall only further quote the words of Gregory, in answer to an inquiry of St. Austin, as to the manner in which he should conduct himself towards the bishops of Gaul and Britain. "We give thee no power over the bishops of Gaul, they being under the Bishop of Arles; but all the bishops of the Britons we commit to thy paternal care." — *Bede*, B. i. c. 7. This is conclusive evidence of fact. These are the names of bishops of the Church of England who existed many hundred years before the Church of Rome gained a footing on our shores!

The government of the ancient British Church was *episcopacy*; and the Church of England at the present day maintains the same discipline. The identity, therefore, of the two churches, is fully established as it respects their *form of government*. The proof which I have just adduced would be sufficient for my present purpose; but, to give it the highest possible authority, I shall attempt to shew, on similar grounds, that this form of government is of *apostolical* appointment. On this subject I would speak with humility, inasmuch as I know how many wise and good men have

* Fuller, Church Hist. Cent. iv. p. 24.

opposed this view, from the allegation that it is not *absolutely* stated in scripture. Every candid person will admit the force of such an objection, because, if the Scriptures left no room for a latitude of opinion, every conscientious inquirer would submit to their authority. Yet the Scriptures do not speak *absolutely* respecting the mode of administering baptism or the Lord's Supper; nor of what is of still more striking moment—the *change* of the Sabbath from the *seventh* day to the *first*. It is not, however, my intention, at present, to enter into the scriptural discussion of episcopacy; and I shall content myself with the following quotation from a most valuable Charge by Archdeacon Brown:—* “Where is your testimony from Scripture? To this it may be briefly answered, that accumulated proofs have been deduced from the internal evidence of the New Testament, as well as from the external evidence of ecclesiastical history, that the apostles were, as their designation implies, sent by the immediate personal appointment of their divine Master; that they transmitted to others the ordinary functions of the ministry which they had received from him; that these again conveyed the same authority to their successors; and that thus the power which is now exercised by the Bishops of the Church of England in calling and sending ‘ministers into the Lord’s vineyard,’ has been derived from its original depositaries.” But, supposing the Scriptures to be dubious on the subject, I ask, what is the likeliest method to confirm us in the belief that it is of apostolic origin? I answer—PRIMITIVE TRADITION, and UNIFORM PRACTICE.†

If, therefore, I can shew that Christianity adopted, and handed down from the very commencement, the government of the Church by bishops, will it not be unanswerable as to its apostolic origin? If this method of proof be not admitted, we must give up the possibility of proving the authenticity and genuineness of the Scriptures themselves, which proceeds on this method. But it is an *infallible* way of proof, and as strong in one case as in another. On opening the Ecclesiastical History, we find the apostle James, Bishop of Jerusalem; St. Mark, the evangelist, Bishop of Alexandria; Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch; Polycarp, ordained Bishop of Smyrna, by St. JOHN; Timothy, Bishop of Ephesus, by St. PAUL; and Titus, of Crete; Papias, St. John’s hearer, Bishop of Hierapolis; Quadratus, a disciple of the apostles, Bishop of Athens; and Clement, Bishop of Rome.‡ These were all apostolical men, exercising the functions and jurisdiction of bishops, *whilst the apostles themselves were yet living*; which circumstance is ample and incontestable proof of the mind and intention of the delegated founders of the Christian Church; and, if any thing further can be wanted to confirm such evidence, it will be the attestation of apostolical men as to the *nature* of the episcopal office.

Ignatius was Bishop of Antioch forty years, and outlived the Apostle St. John only four years; so that he exercised the duties of his bishopric thirty-six years during the life-time of that apostle. In the beginning of his epistle to the *Magnesians*, he speaks of Damas their bishop, of

* J. Hatchard and Son.

† See the motto from Melvill, which I met with after the first publication of these papers, but which I now rejoice to add, in corroboration of my argument.

‡ *Vide* Du Pin, Forbes, &c.

Bassus and Apollonius their presbyters, and of Sotion their deacon. In his epistle to the Trallians, he says, "Let nothing, by any means, be done without the bishops, even as ye now practise. Subject yourselves to the presbyters; and let the deacons study to please all men; for they are not deacons of meats and drinks, but ministers of God's Church." In the same epistle he adds, "He that does any thing without the *bishops*, the presbyters, and deacons, his conscience is defiled." In his epistle to the Ephesians, he speaks of bishops "sealed to the end of the world;" and then commends the Church, and particularly the presbyters, for their unanimous and ready compliance in all things with the *Bishop*. In his epistle to the Philadelphians he exhorts—"Give diligence therefore to partake of the same Eucharist, for there is but one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup in the unity of his blood; one altar, as there is also one Bishop, together with the Presbytery and the Deacons, my fellow-servants." The episcopacy of the Church of England requires the submission of the Presbyters and Deacons to the authority of the Bishop, and is, therefore, in its nature or character, accordant with that of the apostolic Church.

It would be superfluous for me to adduce any further testimony, as I consider that, which I have already produced, UNANSWERABLE with respect to the apostolical usage. And when to this is added, the uniform and universal practice of the Church, that from the earliest germ of Christianity, episcopacy sprung up with it, and that in whatever parts of the world, the Christian religion was planted by apostolic men, it grew up under the shadow of episcopacy, the evidence is OVERWHELMING. On what possible ground but that of a common origin, can it be shewn, that churches far removed from each other, and without a possibility of concert, should maintain the same form of government, and hand it down to the present time? The fact of history is, that every church, whether in Spain or Italy, in Gaul or Britain; whether in Europe, Asia, or Africa, was founded in EPISCOPACY!

I conclude, therefore, that the Church of England, as far as *the form of government* goes, is identical with the ancient British Church, and by consequence, with that church which St. Paul, or some other apostolic man, planted on our shores! And we are bold to assert, that the government of the Church *without bishops* was an invention of the fifteenth century. So that, if there be any worth in the voice of antiquity, if an institution derive value from being that of the primitive Church, and if it be a suspicious thing in another, that it was not heard of, till Christianity had existed fifteen hundred years, do we act wrong, when we say to every Englishman in the words of Scripture, "Stand fast, and hold the TRADITIONS which ye have been taught, whether by *word*, or our epistle?" 2 Thess. ii. 15.

ACCORDANCE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND WITH THE ANCIENT
BRITISH APOSTOLIC CHURCH IN INSTITUTION OF DOCTRINE.

THE following quotations from the ARTICLES of the CHURCH of ENGLAND, will shew the nature of her PROTESTATION against the errors of the Church of Rome.

"THE Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping, and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God."—*Art. xxii.*

"TRANSUBSTANTIATION, or the change of substance of bread and wine, in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ—but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner."—*Art. xxviii.*

"THE sacrifice of masses in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."—*Art. xxxi.*

We are intending in these papers to shew, that the Church of England occupies the place she now holds in the nation, in *her own Right*, and *not* by act of Parliament, concession, or favour; and in proof of this fact, we have demonstrated in two former Letters, her priority to, and independence of, the Romish church; and her identity with the ancient British church, both in *locality* of jurisdiction, and in accordance with the apostolic institution of Episcopacy in *form* of Government. In the present article, we are advancing to the last step of the proof—the accordance of the present Church of England with the ancient British and apostolical Church, in *DOCTRINE*—in which, if we succeed, the whole argument will become irrefragable; and it will immediately follow, that the Church of England *necessarily stands as the representative of Christianity in England.*

In a former paper it was asserted, that the authority which the Church of Rome exercised over the Church of England was by usurpation—that the usurping power brought in customs and doctrines, contrary to those, which had been received by the British Church from the apostolic time.

We proceed to argue that, at the period of the Reformation, when the rights of the Church, which had been long in abeyance, were vindicated, and the yoke of usurpation (which had never been acknowledged by any public act of our Church, nor submitted to, without appeal) was broken—the errors which had been introduced by the Romish Church were also abjected; and the Church of England became, once more, identical in *doctrine*, with the ancient British and Apostolic Church.

That the errors of popery were unknown to the Church of England prior to the coming of St. Austin, the first Roman emissary to Britain in the year 598, is absolutely certain. In the ordinances of the council of Arles, which may be seen in Du Pin, and at the compiling of which, as

we have shewn, three British bishops assisted, A. D. 314,—not a word is said respecting any of those papal doctrines, against which the Church of England protested at the Reformation—a circumstance which is scarcely possible had they been then in existence. This is our *negative* proof. But we have also *positive* proof; we have before shewn, that the Church of England was founded by apostolic men. Now, it is very improbable that the doctrines of the English Church should be different from those of other apostolic churches of that age, planted by the same authorized individuals. But on comparing the doctrines, of the *present* Church of England with the writings which remain to us of those churches, they are found to accord. The only rational conclusion is, that they accord also with the doctrines of the ancient British Church. I do not see how this can be evaded; but in order to remove every doubt from the minds of the most scrupulous, we shall advance another kind of proof. Bishop Stillingfleet, with his accustomed industry, has collected the opinions of Gregory, the Bishop of Rome, who sent St. Austin to our shores; by a reference to which, it will be manifest, that the peculiar doctrines of the papacy were even of a later date than the arrival of that missionary, which must be a triumphant proof that they belong not to the true Church of England, existing before his time.

1. *Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead.*

Gregory affirms, that at the time of death, either the good or evil spirit seizeth upon the soul, and keeps it for *ever*, without any change.—Moral in Job, i. 8,—that in the days of death the just goes to joy, and the wicked with the apostate angel is reprobated.—*Moral in Job*, i. 12.

Church of Rome declares, that there is a purgatory after this life, out of which souls may be helped by the prayers of the faithful.—*Council of Trent*, Sess. 25.

2. *Confession and Pardon.*

Gregory speaks of no other confession than what was required to the reconciling those who had undergone public penance. He refers to the custom then used in his Sacramentary, p. 226; and there is no form of absolution, but by way of prayer to God, which is wholly different from the sacramental judicial absolution required by the Council of Trent.

Church of Rome declares secret confession of all sins to be necessary, in order to remission, and absolution by the priests.—*Sess.* 14. c. 6—8.

3. *Communion in one kind.*

Gregory affirms it to be the constant practice for the people to receive it in both.—*Sac. in quad.* Tr. 3.

Church of Rome declares against the necessity of communion in both kinds.—*Council of Trent.*

4. *Worship of Images.*

Gregory allows their being in temples, but denies any worship to be given to them, for they are placed there solely for instruction.—*Regis*, Epis. 1, 9. Church of Rome declares not only that images are to be placed in churches, but to be worshipped there.—*Sess. C. T. 25.*

5. *Transubstantiation.*

This doctrine of the Church of Rome, which holds the change of the bread and wine of the Eucharist into the real body and blood of Christ, was not fully established till the Council of the Lateran, 1215, and could have no existence in the ancient Church of England.

Neither could the seven Sacraments have been received by the ancient British Church. This number was never decided upon, till the Council of Trent; nor even heard of, till the time of Hugo de St. Victoire, in the *twelfth century*.

6. *Masses for the Dead.*

Gregory supposes those to be in a state of bliss for whom the oblation of *thanksgiving* was made at the altar, as appears from Sacramentary IV. Church of Rome declares that they are intended for the dead in Christ, not yet fully purged from their sins.—*C. T. Sess. 22. c. 2.*

8. *Merit of Good Works.*

Gregory denies that the most sanctified persons procure divine wisdom by their graces—that if he should attain to the highest virtue he should secure eternal life, not by *merits*, but by *pardon*.—*Moral 1, 9, c. 11.* Church of Rome anathematizes those who deny the good works of justified persons to be truly meritorious of grace, and eternal life.—*C. T. Sess. 6 Can. 32.*

From this scheme it will manifestly appear, that the doctrines of the Church of Rome protested against, and abandoned by the Church of England, at the Reformation, did not originally belong to her, but were forced upon her, during the time of her humiliation. In relinquishing these errors, she assumed her own pristine character, and stood forth identical with the British and Apostolic Church in *DOCTRINE*; and is, at this moment, the most venerable and ancient Christian institution in the world! Her singularly wise and temperate exhibition of Scripture truth in her articles, on topics which have ever divided the Christian world, is the admiration of all who are not entirely blinded by prejudice. Her Liturgy in simplicity, in purity, in devotion, is unrivalled; and in Leicester it will not be forgotten, that one of its greatest ornaments, the celebrated *Robert Hall*, declared of it, that it was the *first of uninspired compositions*—whilst in the great and fundamental doctrine of merit and justification, she has placed between herself and the Church of Rome an impassable gulf, which renders contact, much less union, for ever impossible. I refer the reader to the XIth, XIIth, and XIIIth Articles of the Church of England.

The two churches, therefore, are immeasurably separated. There is not, there never can be, whilst the doctrines of both churches remain what they are, any communication between the Churches of England and Rome. They are both indeed of apostolic origin ; and received their institution and government from apostolic men ; but the one has abjected the TRUTH, whilst the other holds it fast — prizes it above all precious substance — and will not let it go.* Thus the Church of England becomes identified with the primitive British Church in PLACE, in GOVERNMENT, in DOCTRINE, and therefore, legitimately its *Representative*. The UNITY is COMPLETE ; and if Christianity is to be acknowledged as the religion of the land, the Church of England NECESSARILY becomes the mode of its administration.

The Church of Rome, when measured by this standard, has no such legitimacy. That church is defective in two things. She possesses not the ancient locality of the British Church, which had existed 500 years before the Romish Church obtained any footing in England — nor does she retain the primitive doctrine of that church. She is, therefore, justly repudiated. The Church of Rome, it is true, received the primitive institution of episcopacy, and the apostolic commission ; but these are rendered ABORTIVE by her perversion of apostolic doctrine. *Ichabod* is written upon her temples, because she has apostatized from the truth. Truth alone gives consistency, authority, and perfection to the apostolic commission ; and where these are united, as in the Church of England, it must be evident to every candid and reflecting mind, their claims are TRANSCENDENT and PARAMOUNT.

None of the churches of the dissenters can, by possibility, have any claim to be the representative of Christianity in England. They also want two things, *primitive locality*, and *apostolic institution*. The orthodox among them have, indeed, one ground, in common with the Church of England, upon which they stand, and that is certainly a strong rock—the truth. Truth is preeminent ; and every Christian man has a right to speak the truth to his neighbour to edification ; this they can claim of right, and in the successful proclamation of truth, every enlightened mind will rejoice. But in England, the Church of England *alone* has apostolical authority. She is the Commissioned Church, inheriting that commission from the apostles of Christ's doctrine, and her functional institution, in an unbroken line of succession, from St. Paul, or some other apostolic man. And at this moment she is exhibiting to every beholder, " a model of temperate forbearance, dignified calmness, and truly Christian Patience under revilings, whilst a numerous company of her priests are giving to the accusations of its enemies, the incontrovertible refutation of a holy, devoted, and laborious life."

Let every Englishman rouse himself to the call of duty, of reason, and justice, and let his heart respond to the awakening cry : " The ark of our faith shall not be abandoned."

* One of the most remarkable replies we remember to have heard, is attributed to Mr. Oulton, the Barrister. Some one used the hackneyed sarcasm, that, between the Church of England and Rome, there was but a paper wall : " True," said he, " but the whole Bible is printed on it."—*Warder*.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, BY NECESSITY, THE NATIONAL
REPRESENTATIVE OF CHRISTIANITY.

"The Constitution of the Christian Church is fixed by the will of its founder, the dictates of which we are not at liberty to accommodate, or bend to the views of human policy. The dispute respecting ecclesiastical government, must, like every other on religion, be determined, *if ever it be determined at all*, by an appeal to scripture, ILLUSTRATED perhaps occasionally, by the *approved usages* of the EARLIEST ANTIQUITY."—*Robert Hall*.

It was impossible that the mind of this intelligent individual should not have perceived the difficulty of this important question, and the TRUE ground upon which the decision of it must rest. The word 'perhaps' is not inserted to imply a doubt in the writer's mind, but to prevent the shock such an enlarged opinion might produce on the minds of his less enlightened and less liberal brethren.—*Britannicus*.

Dr. Doddridge, on "An Established Religion," thus writes:—"Some have represented all encouragement given to one religious profession in preference to another, as a degree of persecution; but now, both a regard to the honour of God, and the good of society, must engage him (the magistrate) to desire and labour that his people may be instructed in what he takes to be truth: for which purpose it will be necessary that some provision be made for those that so instruct them, preferable to other instructors;—that he may maintain such out of his private purse none can doubt; and if he have a discretionary power with respect to any branch of the public revenue, it seems he may apply it to this purpose, even though most of his people were of a different religious persuasion from himself—and, for any who teach different doctrines, or will not submit to the ritual he thinks fit to establish, to claim the same emoluments from him (the state) seems an invasion of that right of private judgment which the magistrate and others joined with him must be allowed to have, as to the manner in which his revenue or theirs shall be disposed of. But then it must be allowed that it will be matter of duty and prudence in the magistrate, and those that join with him, to make his establishment as large as he can, that no worthy and good men who might, as established teachers, be useful to the public, may unnecessarily be hampered and excluded; and for this he will be answerable to God. If the majority of the people, by their representatives, join with the magistrate (the government) in such establishments, it will be the duty of the minority, though they cannot conform themselves, yet to be thankful that they are left in the possession of their own liberty, as by the reasoning above they certainly ought to be. If it be asked whether such dissenters may regularly be forced by the magistrate and majority to assist in maintaining established teachers whom they do not approve; it is answered that this will stand upon the same footing with their contributing toward the expense of a war, which they think not necessary or prudent. If no such coercive power were admitted, it is probable that *covetousness* would drive many into *dissenting* parties in order to save their tithes, or other possessions. So that none can reasonably blame a *government* for requiring such general contributions. In this case it seems fit it should be yielded to, as the determination of those to whose guardianship these dissenters have committed themselves and their possessions." (Lecture LXXXVII. sec. 22.—Vol. IV. p. 503.)

Matthew Henry may be allowed to speak for the non-conformists of his day.—"Let us much more give God praise for the *national establishment of our religion*, with that of our peace and civil liberty; that our Canaan is not only a land flowing with milk and honey, but . . . that the Christian religion, that choice and noble vine, which was so early planted in our land; is still growing and flourishing in it, in despite of all the attempts of the *powers of darkness to root it out*: that it is refined from the errors and corruptions the Church of Rome had, with the help of ignorance and tyranny, introduced; and that the Reformation was in our land a national act;

that Christianity, thus purified, is supported by good and wholesome laws, and is twisted in with the very constitution of our government." Speaking of the *Protestant dissenters*, he adds, "the mercy is more sensibly great, because it is not long since our religion and all the defences of it, with all its supports, were on the brink of ruin; and like Isaac upon the altar, lay ready to be sacrificed to the malice of our Popish enemies; and had the ship (the established Church) then sunk, *our cabin*, (the dissenters) could not have been preserved."

In the preface to the "Autobiography of a Dissenting Minister," we meet with the following passage, which may be allowed to settle the modern question, inasmuch as it is the result of long experience and observation:—"The author does not condemn dissent, seeing that he himself is a dissenter; but what he condemns is, the attempt which is now making to bring all to one level, and to make dissent the rule, instead of the exception. He is perfectly assured and convinced that dissent, bad enough as it is, would be yet worse, *were it not for the existence and operation of the Established Church*; and, so far as religious liberty is concerned, there is more of that under the rule and ascendancy of the Protestant Establishment, than there would be under the domination of any one sect of dissenters. Were the Establishment to be destroyed, there would presently be a struggle amongst the sects for dominion and power; and, secular as dissent already is, it would become greatly more so, if the vast fabric of the Church were demolished."

HAVING, in my last, arrived at the great points which I wished to establish—the apostolicity, independence, and authority of the Church of England; and that she is necessarily the National Church, because Christianity is the National Religion—I humbly trust, this great question has been cleared of many of its perplexing appendages, and that the simple principle evolved, will enable us to judge, with some degree of precision on many subjects vitally connected with her welfare; and, at the same time, enable us to ward off the weapons of her assailants, who, with blind zeal and daring effrontery, menace her existence.

We shall first try the effect of our principle on the universally received assertion—that the Church of England is the *Established Church*. We shall find it act with talismanic power, and the long established error will at once vanish into air.

Established Church! Who established it? We mean as to its origin or institution. Where is the Act of Parliament which enacts it? Will the acute and intuitive Brougham,—will the sage, and venerable Eldon, tell us? They are silent: neither the founder nor the legislative enactment is to be found. It is not more impossible to produce it, than unnecessary. The Church of England existed more than eight hundred years before the first British Monarch, and ages before such things as Acts of Parliament were heard of. The British Monarchy is ancient—the Nobility are ancient—the Commons are ancient—but they are all the children of the Church of England. She is the primeval institution of England; and has, from the beginning, anointed the heads, and placed the crown upon the brows, of her kings. The simple fact is, that as Christianity advanced in England and became the national faith—the Church of England was the sacred form, by which her consolations were administered, and at whose altars her mysteries were celebrated. Instructed by her admonitions, and fortified by her doctrine, our British ancestors joyfully received the crown of *martyrdom* at the hand of imperial persecutors. By her means, our Saxon forefathers were delivered from the errors of Paganism, and at this day, having thrown off a foreign

yoke, she stands triumphantly in the sight of her children, as their best safeguard, their truest friend, and most powerful benefactor. Instead of being established, the Church of England has been at the establishment of every thing dear to us. She has been the assertor of our rights—the establisher of our privileges; and is, at this moment, the foundation of our LIBERTIES.

The "*Union of the Church and State*" is another of our delusions which must, on this principle, be abandoned; we have been so accustomed to hear the assertion—the allegation has been such a fruitful source of polemical discussion—such a powerful plea with dissenters and the subject of so much obloquy and reproach—that I startle in reviewing the assertion I have made. Yet, if my premises are true, it must be so. Who united the Church and State? Where is the Act of Parliament that confirms it? Where is the maxim at common law that affirms it? The *Church of England* and *Christianity* are united—indissolubly united, so that no human power can separate them, without profaning every law of order, truth, and justice: and *Christianity*, it must be allowed, is in strict *alliance* with the State. It is asserted by our highest legal authorities to be "part and parcel of the law of the land"—the foundation of our statute book and the pillar of our Constitution. It is the grand principle of the Constitution "*to maintain in this country the law of God and the true profession of the Gospel.*"* In this way alone, as the *authorized form* of Christianity, can an alliance with the State be implied, and as long as the State maintains its true Christian character, the Church of England will never be ashamed of such company. Christianity is in alliance with the State, and the Church of England is the chosen handmaid of Christianity. This will serve to purify our views of this alliance. It is a holy, a legitimate alliance; and the assertion "*CHURCH and STATE,*" which means that Christianity may ever preside over the institutions of England, will be dearer to us than ever! Let us not believe the flimsy pretext of those who, under the plea of sanctity, or the disguise of a desire for truth, would overthrow the venerable fabric. The splendid testimony of the enlightened Doddridge, and the celebrated Matthew Henry, cited above, is worth a thousand "*Cases*" of modern dissenters. Christianity and the Church of England will fall together. We will not believe the pretended regard of these men for Christianity. It is not genuine. Theirs is the embrace of Judas: they betray with a kiss.

We shall next inquire into the asseveration that "*The King is the head of the Church:*" and it will be important, because it will serve to *define* the extent of the royal power and authority with respect to the Church of England. It is abundantly manifest that the king can in no *ecclesiastical* sense be the head of the Church, because he is not an ecclesiastical person. It must, therefore, be in his civil capacity, as the *head* of the nation—the source of authority and power—as "*DEFENDER of the FAITH,*" that he is considered as the protector and guardian of the Church of England, which is the visible representative of the faith, and the national depository of Christianity. In any other sense, the word "*head*" is altogether inadmissible and inconsistent with *reason*, and

* Duke of Wellington. Deb. Parl. Friday, Aug. 1, 1834.

consequently opposed to the COMMON LAW of England. But let us see whether this view of the subject is in accordance with the opinion of the Church of England *herself*.

"The King's Majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, and other his dominions; unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all *causes* doth appertain: when we attribute to the King's Majesty the chief government, we give not our princes the administering of God's word or of the sacraments; but that only prerogative which we see to have been given always to all godly princes in Holy Scripture, by God himself, that is, that they should rule all *estates* and *degrees* committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal; and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers."—Art. XXXVII.

Nothing can be more sound, temperate, and judicious, than this declaration of the Church, by which the right of the chief magistrate is defined, and the unalienable right of the Church secured. At the same time it must be granted, that princes have occasionally transgressed the limits of their prerogative. Henry VIII. was the first to assume the title of "Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England;" but *his* example is not the standard of English constitutional principles; and if the statute of his obsequious Parliament, which confirmed the title, remain unrepealed—sure I am, the title is as obsolete as many of the canons and laws ecclesiastical, and ought, with them, forthwith to be *rescinded*. We shall hail this reform!

But, that the title is *really* extinct may be collected from the declaration affixed by King James I. to the Book of Articles; and which, as it is the last royal document of this kind, and drawn up by a prince who *understood* and *valued* his prerogative as much as any king that ever lived, it may be considered decisive as to the non-existence of the title "Supreme Head of the Church of England."

"Being by God's ordinance, according to our just title—Defender of the Faith, and Supreme GOVERNOR of the Church within these our dominions, we hold it most agreeable to this our kingly office, to *conserve* and *maintain* the Church committed to our charge," &c. We may rest assured, from these words of King James's declaration, that "Head" of the Church is not inherent in the title of our kings; and that the word "Governor," which has been substituted in its place, is as great a misnomer. It ought to be *Guardian*, as may be *proved* from the declaration itself; and that by governor the king in effect only asserts himself to be the SUPREME CHURCHWARDEN. If our kings have assumed more, it is *their* fault, and ought to be remedied. If in practice, we repeat, any power has been assumed which appears to overstep these declarations, it must be considered as an undue stretch of authority; and if the English people were at this time actuated by the true and genuine spirit of their forefathers, characterised by a generous love of freedom, and desire for justice—in demanding reform, their great object would be to secure for their ancient and venerable Church, its true and legitimate independence, and deliver their *dearest* BIRTHRIGHT from every encroachment of time or usage which may have a tendency to weaken its influence, or bring its institutions into contempt.

Such a reform as this would be worthy of Englishmen! It would

neither be difficult nor dangerous in this case, to follow the dictates of truth and justice. But there are men abroad who are not influenced by these principles—who are devoid of English sentiment and feeling—and who, under the garb of an hypocritical liberality, are urging on the present ministry* in the dangerous career of precipitate reform. We hope and trust they will be disappointed, and that our governors will manifest, what has ever been the ruling characteristic of the governors of England—a manly and straightforward policy, dignified at every step by a respect for RELIGION.

“ If it once come to this,” said the celebrated Dr. Owen, when preaching before parliament, “ that you shall say that you have nothing to do with religion as rulers of the nation, God will quickly manifest that he has nothing to do with you as rulers of the nation ! Certainly it is incumbent on you to take care that the faith which was once delivered to the saints, in all the necessary concerns of it, may be *protected*, preserved, propagated among the people over which God has set you. If a father, as a father, is bound to do what answers this in his own family to his children—a master, as a master, to his servants ; if you will justify yourselves as fathers, or rulers of your country, you will find this to be incumbent upon you.”

And the no less celebrated Flavel, speaking of the duty of governors, says, “ It is to rule and govern the people over whom God has set them, with wisdom ; carefully providing for their souls in every place of their dominions.”

The English people are not to be deluded by the false pretences of infidel machinators. *They* are not the persons to whom they will entrust the remodelling of their Church. They have seen enough in a neighbouring country, to convince them of the tender mercies of these men for religion. The English are not an infidel people. They fear God, honour their king, and venerate their Church. They are not yet prepared to sacrifice innocence on the altar of public licentiousness—nor to elevate prostitution on the pedestal of national morals — nor to enthroned reason in the seat of Divine wisdom. There are such men in England, but they belong not to her children ; and I am much mistaken, if the English nation do not soon convince them of the fact.† Already we behold returning symptoms of our ancestral vigour. The English lion is beginning to rouse himself from his cumbent position—already his eyeballs are collecting their inbred fire, his limbs are filling with native strength, his mighty chest heaves with his rising courage, and his whole attitude bespeaks speedy destruction to his foes.

* The Grey Administration.

† They have now done so.

ON THE REVENUES OF THE CHURCH.

"From the united considerations of religion and constitutional polity, from their opinion of a duty to make a sure provision for the consolation of the people, and the instruction of the ignorant, they have incorporated and identified the estate of the Church with the mass of private property, of which the State is *not* the proprietor, for either *use* or *dominion*, but the *guardian* only, and the *regulator*. They (our forefathers) have ordained, that the provision of this Establishment should be as *stable as the earth on which it stands*."—*Burke*.

"Let the Laity ask themselves by what tenure any one among them has a better right than any other, to reap the produce of any particular field, and to exclude others of the Laity from it? They must answer, by the laws of the country in which they reside. But the same laws have given to the Clergy a right to a decimal part."—*Knox*.

"The far greater part of the reservation of a tenth for the service of the Church, was severed from it in the reign of Henry VIII., and bestowed on noblemen and private families; and these tithes have been bought and sold ever since, as a rent-charge on the land. The ministers of the Church bear the reproach of an immense income, although what they receive for their *actual services* is not half what the Laity receive, who have bought these estates (and even ladies possess them) under the names of tithes, although the serving vicars and perpetual curates of some of these parishes receive but a most scanty pittance."

"The total amount of the gross annual revenues of the several archiepiscopal and episcopal sees in England and Wales is 180,462*l.* affording an average of 6,683*l.*; and the total amount of the net annual revenues of the same is 160,114*l.* affording an average of 5,930*l.*

"The total amount of the gross annual revenues of the several cathedral and collegiate churches in England and Wales, together with the separate gross annual revenues of the several dignitaries and other spiritual persons, members of cathedrals or collegiate churches, is 350,861*l.* and the total amount of the net annual revenues of the same is 272,828*l.*

"The total number of benefices with and without cure of souls, the incumbents whereof have made returns to our inquiries, omitting those which are permanently or accustomably annexed to superior preferments, and which are included in the statements respecting those preferments, is 10,498; the total amount of the gross annual revenue of which benefices is 3,191,950*l.* affording an average of 304*l.*; and the total amount of the net annual revenues of the same is 3,000,393*l.* affording an average of 285*l.*

"The total number of benefices, with and without cure of souls, in England and Wales, including those not returned to us, is 10,701; the total gross income of which, calculated from the average of those returned, will be 3,253,662*l.*; and the total net income thereof will be 3,058,248*l.*"—*Parliamentary Returns*.

"This endowment by our forefathers is of necessity held *in trust* by the government of the country for the especial service of the sanctuary, and for the promoting of the godliness and happiness of the population; and 'for no other use, or intent, or purpose whatsoever.' It is held by a trust-deed that may be known and read of all men;—a deed, be it observed, containing stipulations special and defined;—it is—OUR COMMON PRAYER BOOK."—*Watkins*.

SUPPOSING the position to which we advanced in our last paper, to be fairly established;—that the Church of England does not owe her institution to any establishment of law, and that she holds not her office of national instructor, from any particular favour or election of the State, but as the necessary representative of Christianity, and that the State cannot recognize any other in her place, because she alone has apostolic

origin and succession ; and as the *commissioned* attendant of *Christianity*, which the national polity has adopted and interwoven with the laws and usages of the realm, she necessarily occupies the sacred station she holds, and consecrates the temple of the State, and its functionaries, to the service of God ;—we shall proceed to inquire into the origin and destination of her revenues.

The long established but false conception, that the Church of England had been established by the State, has created erroneous opinions in the minds of many with respect to the nature of her provision. They have concluded, that as she was first established by the State, the State must originally have provided for her wants, and have been at the expense of her institution ; and, as the offspring of error is always more degenerate than its parents, it has given birth to the monstrous impiety, that “the Church is the creature of the State !” and it is now commonly asserted as the avowed opinion, or rather mandate of certain self-organized legislatures, that the church estates are public property, and that the clergy have no more right in, or claim on them, than any other public servants have on the public purse,

But the simple statement of the truth will instantly remove the erroneous conclusion. *The State* had nothing to do with the establishment of the Church, and could not, therefore, be at the expense of it. What *the State never gave, the State can never reclaim*. The origin of the church provision takes its rise in the remotest antiquity. The ancient British kings gave out of their rude and primeval treasures to its support. During the Roman dominion, its revenues were augmenting ; and long before the arrival of the Romish Missionary, A.D. 592, its possessions were large enough to tempt the cupidity of our Saxon invaders, and to afford them spoil. Under the usurpation of Popery, the riches of the Church were greatly increased ; but this is no prejudice to the argument. The Church had received a change of masters, but its identity remained. It was oppressed by a foreign yoke, but it was an *involuntary* bondage ; and the wealth that flowed into it was not given to the usurpers, who were but transitory occupants, but to the Church, as an *unchanging* and *perpetual* institution. When she threw off her usurpers she did not, as we have shown, break the unity, nor destroy the identity, of the Church : and, in entering upon the enjoyment of its revenues, she merely resumed her *RIGHT*. As a corporate body, this right could not be destroyed by a temporary invasion, unless the invasion had been of such a character as to destroy its existence, and render it incapable of restoration. The usurpation of Cromwell did not impeach the right of Charles II. to the revenues of the crown, on his restoration. On his return to the throne, the crown revenues reverted to him by *right*. So it was in the case of the Church. But if this distinction is not sufficiently convincing, which, however, we consider as the foundation of Right, let it be remarked, that the revenues of the Church were disposed of by a King, a Parliament, and House of Convocation, holding all the superstitions of the Church of Rome, handing it over to its present proprietors—the *TRUE* representatives of the ancient Church ; and that it was, after the vindication of the Church from usurpations, and the assertion of British law, that the doctrinal Reformation of the Church commenced.

The revenues of the Church of England stand upon the oldest and

fairest title. They were the gifts of the original landlords of the soil—the offering of their piety, and the offspring of their devotion; or, if wrung from them by the power of conscience, it was a manifestation of their desire to atone, by a lasting benefit to their posterity, for the deeds they had wrought against their own generation. These are funds **UNALIENABLE** by man—a sacred deposit, which no human power can turn away from its legitimate destination. Are we to be told that this was done at the time of the Reformation? and that the revenues of the Church were seized and applied to other, and temporal uses? It is painfully true. The needy violence of a prodigal tyrant, who governed the law, and the shameless peculation of his parasites, absorbed a very large portion of the church revenue. Dukes and earls seized on the wealth which ought to have “fed Christian pastors and their flocks.” The ruined monastery might have been converted into a school for moral and divine teaching—the estates which nourished the vices of nuns and friars might have been converted to the noblest purposes of divine charity—whilst the luxurious cup, which pampered the pride of an ostentatious and embroidered priesthood, might have flowed with blessings to the children of the poor. But it was not so: the evil passions prevailed; the holders of power rioted in the abundance of spoil; and the consecrated treasures of our forefathers were desecrated, as the panders to lust and avarice. But, surely, no living mortal will set up such an example as a precedent for similar outrages upon the rights of property, religion, and decency. The commission of crime can never justify its repetition. Fraud is never to be quoted as a reason for injustice. Violence and robbery are beacons, to warn—not lights, to be followed.

Much of the alienated church property is now in the possession of many to whom it has descended by inheritance; and it would be adding *cruelty to injustice* to demand its restoration: but the crown lands, in the hands of the commissioners, which have been derived from such a source, might, and ought to be restored. It would be but an offering to justice.

It is, therefore, evident, that *church property* is utterly independent of the State—that its title is of the most sacred and inviolable character—that the State has no control over it for “**DOMINION OR USE**”—that it may be within its competence to regulate, to direct its expenditure through a proper medium, in the course of its original destination, and to render it powerful and available, by a strict watch, to the general purposes of religion, and the welfare of the community;—but it cannot for a moment be doubted, looking over our past history, and contemplating the present aspect of things, that the State has overstepped these bounds, and made fearful inroads on the independence and sacredness of the Church of England. Not only have the functionaries of the State seized upon the estates of the Church, but they have assumed an *authority* which is altogether unjustifiable. The abuses of the Church are strongly urged and reiterated on every side, and her reform is impatiently demanded; whilst it is overlooked, that the majority of these abuses arise from the *innovations* of the State. No person questions the propriety of reform in the Church; and when necessary, he that resists reform, resists the ordinance of God. But let the State begin with *itself first*. Let it restore her spoliated revenue—yield up its gratuitous authority—and give

to the Church its true and legitimate government : reform will then flow in its natural channel, and may be restrained from overflowing and devastating the land.

If the British public were only alive to their *real* duty—if they did but manifest the spirit and wisdom of their forefathers—were they characterised by that genuine love of freedom, which seeks that blessing for itself, and pursues it by lawful methods—were they desiring reform because reform was *necessary*, they would secure every thing they desire, in the surest way, by the avoidance of all injustice, both public and private ; by reverencing the sacred maxims of truth and virtue ; and by taking religion, in every step of the journey through the ruggedness and difficulty of change, as their permanent guide.

ON THE CONVOCATION, OR SYNOD, OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

“There was one thing yet wanting, to complete the reformation of the Church ; which was, a restoring a primitive discipline against scandalous persons, the establishing the GOVERNMENT of the Church in *ecclesiastical* hands, and the taking it out of *lay hands*, who have so long PROFANED it.”—*Bp. Burnet, Hist. of the Reformation.*

HAVING, in a former letter, established the apostolicity, independence, and authority of the Church of England ; and having shewn, in my last, that, in no true sense, can it be considered as united to the State ; and that, as the State was neither the founder nor endower of the Church, so it can exercise no authority over its revenues, except for the purpose of conserving and directing them ; and having shewn likewise, that the title of the king as HEAD of the Church, is not in EXISTENCE,* and that the title “Governor,” which had succeeded to it, does not mean an authoritative ruler over, and regulator of church matters ; it remains that I proceed to show, in what or whom this authoritative power is vested—inasmuch as such a power is necessary in every society.

In the Church of England, this power is inherent in, and inseparable from, its CONVOCATION, which is the legitimate representative of its power and influence.

It is not necessary for me to enter into a long historical detail of this ecclesiastical bulwark : suffice it to say, that it has its establishment as far back as the wants of an incorporated society made it necessary ; and as to its origin, it is lost in the distance of antiquity. Nor is it necessary for my present purpose, to enter into the form and structure of its constitution ; as that varied, and must be expected to vary, with the forms around it. In civil polity, as in architecture, all unsightly proportions ought to be avoided. It must, therefore, expect to be adapted

* Since writing my former Letter, I have met with a passage in Burnet, which is decisive as to the fact :—“They enacted an oath of acknowledging the Queen Supreme Governor in all causes, and over all persons. The title of Supreme Head was changed, partly because the Queen had some scruples about it,” &c.

to, and to dovetail with, other institutions of the State, equally important ; otherwise, it would disfigure the body politic, and prove a weakness to it ; and whoever, from obstinate adherence to antique forms, (I speak not of acknowledged principles,) attempts to build them on modern usages, will beget the preposterous, and expose himself to the charge of folly. But it is not my present intention to enter into any discussion of this kind ; I have to do with principles. The ancient existence and high authority of Convocation, are indisputable. Its authority in *ecclesiastical* matters is as *transcendent* as that of the British legislature in civil affairs. It is the true organ of ecclesiastical government.

The Assembly of Convocation has power to correct abuses ; censure and depose bishops ; to examine and censure improper books and scandalous persons ; to enact and publish canons ; to alter and reform the Liturgy ; and, in short, to do whatever may be done by a spiritual authority.

We perceive, therefore, that all power necessary for the government of the Church is vested in Convocation. But it went further than this, and, independent of the House of Commons, had the sole power of imposing taxes on the clergy ; which, while it is another argument for the independence and sacredness of church property, must be acknowledged to be an inordinate power, and inconsistent with public unity. This power remained with Convocation till the reign of Charles II. when the exercise of it was yielded up to Parliament, with a reservation of the *right* : so that the Convocation still has that power, as a reference to the acts of that time will fully prove.* Not that it will ever be wise and reasonable to assert it ; but such is the case.

Since the Convocation conceded the privilege of granting supplies to the crown, the State has infringed on its freedom, and there has been a tacit acquiescence on the part of Convocation. All other business has been disused. From this cause, the evils of the Church have accumulated, and are now prodigious. Throughout the reign of Charles II. the Convocation was assembled by writ through the archbishops, and members residing about London, and met every week, till Parliament was dissolved ; but no synodical act was passed. At the commencement of the reign of William and Mary, A. D. 1689, the Convocation was not only called, but met, and proceeded to business. Considerable expectations were entertained with respect to its deliberations, but they were not realized. After this, the Convocation lay in a state of inactivity till A. D. 1700, when the Archbishop of Canterbury made considerable efforts to restore the ancient use and authority of Convocation. Nor were his efforts altogether in vain ; for, ever since that time, at the meeting of Parliament, the Convocation has been regularly convened, and solemnly opened. The Lower House has uniformly chosen its *prolocutor* ; and the assembly has continued to sit occasionally, till Parliament has broken up, or been dissolved : and it is on all hands allowed, and sanctioned by the express words of Bishop Beveridge, that "*the Convocation is of right to be assembled concurrently with Parliament, and may come to many preparatory resolutions, without a royal license !*"—(State of Convoc.)

Such is the state of Convocation. I have used no colouring in its history. The bare statement of the facts sufficiently shows the long

* Echard, Charles II.

injustice and oppression under which it has laboured. Had such an institution been *unnecessary*, it would never have existed. Such institutions do not owe their existence to the enterprises of theory, but to the stern laws of necessity. In the progress of the social league, mankind found such additions were wanting to the public weal. They rose as they were necessary, on the experience of man. But the wants and experience of man are the same in all ages. They may vary their appearance, but not their essence. Convocation, or some assembly embodying its power, is as necessary now as it ever was. It ought, indeed, never to have been disused; it has been in opposition to the law of universal order; and the consequences have been fearful, and are now alarming. The time, however, has at length arrived, which imperatively demands its restoration to its fullest power. The welfare, the EXISTENCE of the Church of England, is involved in the question! This is manifest.

When the Convocation was willing to give up the privilege of taxing itself into the hands of the legislature, the other concerns of that assembly began, by degrees, to be considered as at the discretion of Parliament; nor was the tacit consent of Convocation so much to be wondered at. The doctrines, and articles, and liturgy of the Church, were then well and happily settled; and in allowing the House of Commons to deal with the secular part of its affairs, the Convocation did not think they were acting unwisely. At the period alluded to, the members of the two Houses were also members corporate of the Church of England. In committing her concerns into their hands, she reasoned on the simplest and most rational grounds, that HER SONS WOULD DO HER NO HARM. Nor have they, upon the whole, betrayed their trust. They have carried her triumphantly through many a stormy hour. But the imagined exigencies * of the State have required that others than her sons should be admitted into the assembly of Parliament. Be it so. But let not this act injuriously affect the interests of the Church. The implied compact between Convocation and the House of Commons is now at an end; *the parties are not the same*; and the present constitution of the House of Commons renders the exercise of church legislation at once unlawful and impossible.

In vain will it be urged, that the Church may still safely confide her interests in the hands of the legislature, since the majority of its members are true to her interests. But what does this admission imply, but that a proportion of both houses are inimical to her interests? It

* In a debate (1832) on the reduction of army expenses, Lord Althorp is reported to have said, "That he was one who had used the argument that Catholic Emancipation would enable the government to reduce the army, but he was sorry to find that he had been wrong in his expectations." In a debate on Irish tithes, in the same year, Lord John Russell is reported to have said: "When he had advocated the restoration of the Catholics to their privileges, he little thought that as soon as they possessed them, they would, by means of their numerical strength, try to turn equality into tyranny." In a debate on the affairs of Ireland (1833), Lord Grey is reported to have said: "Their lordships well recollected the Catholic question. Nobody was more sanguine upon that question than he was. He thought, that necessary, permanent, and fundamental measures, would have produced peace and contentment in Ireland. He however said it, for truth obliged him to assert it, that in that hope he had been most grievously disappointed."—*Archdeacon Brown's Charge*, 1833.

amounts to the *rational* and encouraging announcement, that the enemies of the Church are constituted her *legal* advisers and *faithful* guardians. And though, at present, such a legislating power might not be able to effect any great or injurious changes in her polity, yet a power will exist that must *necessarily* be working to her disadvantage. And is it to be expected that the opposing party will remain stationary? Is it not now registered as a fact, in the history of human affairs, that even a small party in any assembly or society, knit together by strong and influential motives, gradually increase their influence, till they attain sufficient strength to attempt their object? And in the present case, the party within the house are aided by a strong and energetic party *without*; and when the strength within the house is sufficient to enforce that which is demanded without, the plea of the Church Reform will be the platform of her overthrow.

But, supposing that such a catastrophe is visionary; yet, from the very elements of our constitution, it is evident that whilst the affairs of the Church, her discipline, and revenues remain at the disposal of Parliament, when the representatives in that house of different religious societies increase, every thing connected with the Church will become a matter of contention, and give rise to jealousies, heart-burnings, and all those evils attached to a deliberative assembly, the individuals comprising which are swayed by contending interests, and impelled by conflicting motives. When the vessel of the State is once launched on such a sea of difficulties, who shall attempt to detail the consequences? Not the Church only, but the State itself will be endangered. What counsel can be taken amidst perpetual bickerings and alarm? What safety can exist, when counsellors are disputing among themselves for private emolument or individual pre-eminence?

But enough: who sees not the necessity for immediate change? The demand is imperative,—the necessity is overwhelming,—*the power of legislating for the Church must be restored to its original and legitimate assembly, the CONVOCATION.*

The period for its restoration has, indeed, *long since* arrived, but it has been overlooked; not because the heads of the government did not think it a subject of sufficient importance, but because they did not care to encounter the difficulties, which they considered to be connected with it: nor is it to be expected that rulers, in the midst of their high and laborious employments, will create unnecessary trouble for themselves. Whilst the machine works well, and they can perceive no positive evil likely to arise from the operation of any existing institution, they ought to be the *last* to enter upon great changes; but when they perceive an irregularity of motion, from which they have reason to apprehend some disorganization of its structure; or when, from a peculiarity of working in some important part, they foresee injury must arise to the whole; then it is their duty and wisdom immediately to apply a remedy. To hesitate at such a moment—to be either indolent or pusillanimous—would prove them unworthy of their high station; and to refuse to act, would for ever stigmatize them as traitors to their country. And can any man doubt whether we are now under those circumstances, when such interference is necessary, and such a remedy ought to be applied?

Every person perceives that this present moment is a CRISIS—that something must be done, and that a great effort must be made. No policy can be more fatal than shutting our eyes to real danger. The evil is then allowed to take its own course; and by receiving no check, makes the more rapid progress, and by meeting no resistance, *brings on a more certain overthrow.* —

THE CONVOCATION MUST BE RESTORED.

The writer of this article does not mean to imply that the constitution of Convocation does not require revision. Such an assertion would be approaching, but could never reach the rashness, of those who are always declaiming on the superior light and knowledge of the present age, and condemning as faulty every thing that is antiquated. Man is neither omnipotent nor omniscient; and, consequently, his works are fading and imperfect. The noblest edifice gives way to time, and requires to be fortified against the ravages of succeeding years. The same law must operate upon civil and moral institutions; and, as in the former case, the materials of which his edifice is constructed (whatever changes or modifications they may undergo) can never be annihilated,—so, in the latter case, whatever repair or alteration may be required in the civil or moral institutions of society, yet the principles upon which they are founded, are the LAWS impressed by the Supreme Ruler upon the condition of man, and are imperishable. This august view of a vital principle, which pervades all the institutions of man, and acts as the wheels of universal society, impelling it forward in one harmonious whole, to its grand and ultimate limit, ought ever to be present to the mind of him who wishes to reform. It will give prudence and caution to his counsels, and prevent that rash enterprise, which is the offspring of ignorance, and the parent of confusion. Hence innovators are always found to be presumptuous, crying up their own untried theories, and despising the dear-bought wisdom of ages. They hurry back at once to the simple elements of things, and considering these as a mathematical point, generate the straight line of their system, and leave out of their calculation all the windings and revolutions of ages, by which those elements have been mixed up and incorporated with the body of society.

Whilst we should keep as far as possible from the counsels of such men, we must avoid falling into the contrary extreme of denying the necessity of all alteration whatever. The ancient institution of which we are speaking, in its origin, was, in some measure, accommodated to the prevailing taste of that day, and adapted, of course, to the modes of their social existence; and as far as these accommodations to the *then* state of society were allowed to prevail, it must be granted that they are of a mutable nature, and may change as the modes of society change. It does not become us to say how this adaptation of the Convocation is to be effected. We do not, however, think it such a difficult question as some people apprehend. All we wish at present is, to vindicate the rights of our venerable and beloved Church; and to establish the principle, that THE CONVENTION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND MUST, OF NECESSITY, BE RESTORED TO ITS ANCIENT INDEPENDENCE AND AUTHORITY.

ON THE UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE.

"They did not object to the Dissenters educating their youth in the highest degrees of human learning; but he called on them not to desecrate those walls which for three centuries had been hallowed by the prayers and praises of the reformers of England, who had maintained the pure episcopalian form of government, which he hoped was now permanently established, by admitting men of all religions, who would either convert them into the arena of turbulent disputation, or, which perhaps would be even still worse, deprive them of the guardianship of Christian faith and hope; which once withdrawn, would render the age of peculiar temptation more critical and dangerous than ever, and deprive the State of England of that continued accession of Christian and good subjects, which it had been the honour and privilege of the Universities of England to supply."—*Sir R. Inglis's Speech in Parliament.*

"Amidst all this confusion and error through seasons of political anarchy and religious tempest, the Church of England has ever been the pole star which has guided the bewildered mariner to a haven of rest; the Universities of England have stood in the gap, and unflinchingly maintained the monarchical institutions of the country, and the rights and liberties of the people. They have, with equal courage and success, resisted the tyranny of a king, and the oppression of a parliament. Has all this been accidental, and the fortuitous result of temporary coincidence? Has it not rather risen from the principles of Christian unity and freedom, which a common religious training instilled, and a common sense of danger called into action?"—*Lay Member of the Senate.*

HAVING in some former papers maintained the independence of the *Church of England*, and established her identity with the ancient British and Apostolic Church, by a line of argument which in the opinion of many whose judgment I esteem, is considered *unanswerable*, I am urged, from what has lately occurred in Parliament, to offer a few observations on the same undeniable principle, with a design to secure inviolate the unity and integrity of our ANCIENT UNIVERSITIES.

It will be allowed, without much difficulty, that the two Universities, with respect to their origin and destination, stand upon the same footing, and that the line of argument which applies to one, may with equal force and propriety be extended to the other.

My first object will be to remove a false and erroneous impression from the minds of the public, which has been long and deeply, and almost universally imbibed; I mean that the *Universities* are of *Roman Catholic foundation*. And as the records of the University of Oxford have been better preserved than those of Cambridge, I shall have recourse to them in order to show, that like the Church of England, these venerable seats of learning extend back, in their ORIGIN, even to the remotest periods of British history, and that their institutions were celebrated and famous *many ages* before the Roman Church *unhappily* found a resting place in England!

The indefatigable and oracular *Camden* thus gives his testimony, which is founded on the study and collation of ancient historical documents.

"The wisdom of our ancestors, as appears in our history, consecrated

even in the *BRITISH TIMES* this city (Oxford) to the muses, translating them from Greeklade (now a small town in Wilts) hither, as to a more fruitful nursery." Camden is a witness of great authority. An extract from the writings of *Alexander Necham*, in which Oxford is cited by its primitive appellation, "will strongly corroborate his statement. "Italy," he says in his book *de Natura Verum*, "claims superior knowledge of civil law; but the study of divinity, and the liberal arts, proves that the University of Paris deserves the preference. Agreeably also to Merlin's prophecy, wisdom has flourished at the *Ford of Oxen*, and will in due time pass over into Ireland."

These writers are speaking of times long before the Church of Rome was known in Britain. But we have far more circumstantial evidence to shew, that the foundation of our Universities is altogether independent of Roman Catholic influence.

The Saxon invasion, which took place a hundred years before that of the Roman Catholic, extended its ravages to the Universities, as indeed, to every place of note in the kingdom. In the year 600, we may place the invasion of the Roman Church; but her emissaries do not seem to have greatly interfered with the Universities until the time of St. Grymbold, after the time of the Danish irruption, and under the reign of the immortal Alfred. This was about A.D. 880.

"When the storm of the Danish war was over," says Camden, "the most religious Prince Alfred *restored* their retreats to the long exiled muses; and founded three colleges, one for grammarians, another for philosophy, and a third for divinity." Alfred seems to have invited over, or at least to have given his countenance to several foreign scholars, who stood high for their learning in the Roman Catholic Church. This will be more fully explained by the following passage in the annals of the new monastery at Winchester:—

"In the year of our Lord 806, the second year of the arrival of St. Grymbold in England, the University of Oxford was begun; the first who presided and read divinity lectures in it, being St. Neoth, an abbot and able divine, and St. Grymbold, a most eminent professor of the incomparable sweetness of the sacred pages; Aesser, the monk, an excellent scholar, professing grammar and rhetoric; John, monk of the church of St. David, giving lectures in logic, music, and arithmetic; and John, a monk of St. Grymbold, a man of great parts, and an universal scholar, teaching geometry and astronomy before the most glorious and invincible King Alfred, whose memory will dwell like honey in the mouths of all. Soon after, as we find in an excellent MS. of the said Aesser, who was at that time professor here, broke out a sharp and fatal quarrel between Grymbold and those very learned men whom he had brought hither with him, and the old scholars whom he found there; who, on his coming, unanimously refused to receive his rules, methods, and forms of lecturing, that Grymbold introduced. Three years had passed without any great difference between them; but the secret aversion afterwards broke out with the utmost violence. In order to quell it, the invincible King Alfred, as soon as he heard of it by the messages and the complaints from Grymbold, went in person to Oxford to put an end to the dispute, and he took the greatest pains to hear the causes and complaints on both sides. The foundation of the difference was this: the *old*

scholars maintained, that before Grymbold came to Oxford, learning *had flourished* there, though the scholars at that time were fewer than in *more ancient times*; the *greater* part being driven out by the cruelty and oppressions of the Pagans. They also proved and shewed, and that by the undoubted testimony of *ancient* chronicles, that the ordinances and regulations of the place were established by certain religious and learned men, such as *Gildas, Melkinnus, Ninnius, Kentigern*, and others, who had all lived to a good old age in these studies, having settled matters there in peace and harmony; and also, that St. Germanus came to Oxford, and stayed there half a year, in his journey over Britain to preach against the Pelagian heresies, and wonderfully approved their plan and institution. The king, with unheard-of condescension, gave both parties attentive hearing, and repeated his pious and reasonable advice to maintain mutual union and concord, and left them with the prospect that both parties would follow his advice, and embrace his institutions."

But it seems the decision of the king was far from being satisfactory to St. Grymbold. The "invincible" Alfred was too much of a Briton—a *Conservative*,—and was not willing to give up the ancient rights of the University to the will of the Roman doctors. The same writer continues: "But Grymbold, offended at this proceeding, immediately retired to the monastery of Winchester; and he also caused his tomb to be removed there from Oxford, in which he intended to lay his bones, when his course of life was ended."

We have thus the MOST UNDOUBTED EVIDENCE, that the origin of our Universities is independent of the Church of Rome; that they are clearly identified with the ancient British and Apostolic Church, and that they must have existed at least 500 years before the Church of Rome visited our shores!

From Alfred's decision, it is evident that the three colleges he founded were given to the *early* proprietors—the representatives of Gildas, Melkinnus, and Kentigern, who were Church of England men, in the fullest sense of the designation. And it is manifest that whatever power the Church of Rome afterwards exercised in the Universities, was not an original right; but acquired by artifice, or usurped by violence. At the Reformation, the Universities and the revenues reverted back to their proper owners—to men, who were the legitimate representatives of the ancient British Church, and the true successors of those primitive men, Gildas and Kentigern, by whom they were founded and instituted.

Should it be urged, notwithstanding, that some of the colleges were founded under the dominion of the Church of Rome, it does not form any solid objection to the argument. They were founded on the *ancient* basis, and without a *legal title*; and what is more, during a time of *usurpation*. Under such circumstances, restitution can neither be demanded nor given. It would be just as rational to insist, that whatever wealth or accession of territory accrued to the crown, during the usurpation of Cromwell, belonged, and should have been restored, to the usurping party. No. Usurpation itself is a crime; and the least punishment that can be awarded is, that it should be mulcted to the extent of its unjustly acquired booty.

The present Church of England and the Universities of Oxford and

Cambridge are clearly identified, for at least fifteen hundred years ! Their league is ancient—their union is complete—their interests inseparable. And does it now require a debate in the British Parliament to decide, whether these ancient institutions shall remain in the same relation to each other, and descend to our posterity in the same wholesome integrity, in which they have been handed down to ourselves ? It is disgraceful enough that it should have formed the subject of dispute—but it must proceed no further, if reason and justice are yet to reign in the councils of Britain !

Shall two millions of Dissenters out of the fourteen millions of Englishmen, and they, too, of incongruous and varied sects, have influence, by their arts, to blind the eyes of the people of England, and by their clamours to sway the British senate to commit a suicidal act, by putting out their own glory, and an unjust one, by dismembering the Church of England ? But what *right* has the Parliament to interfere ? As *chartered* corporations they have a *right* to the full exercise of the privileges of their charter ; and, unless it can be shewn that they have departed from the object for which they were founded, Parliament has no right, as contradistinguished from Power, to interfere with their regulations. What delinquency has the University committed ? Has it failed to answer the purposes of its foundation ? Have they not, by their labours and learning, placed England at the head of the nations, and rendered the Church of England the most illustrious in Christendom ? The fact is, that they were never in a more flourishing state than at present. And yet the neglect of duty could form the only ground for legislative interference. On this point let us hear a most distinguished witness :—“ From all that I have heard, and seen, and read, I fearlessly assert, that the manners, and the morals, the religion, and the learning of our sons, will bear an advantageous comparison with all the good that is to be found in the most famed academic establishments in the world.”* With as much right might Parliament enact that the colleges of the Independents, at Homerton and Cheshunt, should be open to other sects of “ monstrous growth,” and that they should be equally partakers of their privileges, and trusts, and revenues ! And what *right* have the Dissenters to expect to be admitted into the colleges of the Church of England ? Colleges, as we have seen, erected almost contemporaneously with her own establishment beyond the records of history, intended for the education of her members, and the maintenance of her worship ; “ and those who are not members of the Church of England have no more right to claim a participation in the pecuniary advantages which belonged to that Church, than a member of that Church had to share in the endowment founded at Highbury, or any other dissenting college.”† We do not want to deny that the Dissenters have been useful in the community—we do not wish to interfere with them ; nay, we rejoice in it ; we only wish them to act upon the same principle. If they conscientiously dissent from the Church of England, let them endeavour to glorify God and to do good to men, on what they consider a better principle. But let them not be discontented, and murmur at those who prefer the “ good old way,” and disquiet the land in the hope of bringing every thing to their own

* Professor Sedgwick.

† Lord Chancellor Brougham, Deb. Par. August 1, 1833.

standard. Let them not pertinaciously adopt a system of hostility against the Church of England, because she does not tally with their heterogeneous views. Bigotry and intolerance have now changed sides. It used to be the Politico-Dissentero-warcry against the Church of England; but never has the real character of these *things* been so developed as in these days. In the times of Cromwell they used the sword; and would they not now, if they had it?*

The note at the foot of this page requires no comment. It is not a fortnight since, in full conclave, the Board of Congregational Ministers issued a decree, as stern as that of the Medes and Persians, "that, hereafter, no minister in whose congregation the Church of England prayers were used, should be admitted to associate at the Board of their deliberations." Is this religious liberty? Is this the extent of their trumped-up liberality? Is this the display of their vaunted superiority to persecution? "My soul, come not thou into their secret; unto them, mine honour, be not thou united."

The University of Cambridge has shewn them "a more excellent way;" she has admitted Dissenters of every class to the whole routine of her studies: so that they may obtain all the advantages of a university education; but she cannot admit them, as Dissenters, to be parts of her body. She is the college of the Church of England, and her members can only be of that Church. It is preposterous and irrational to expect otherwise. The Dissenters are fully aware of this, and how ruinous their admission would be to the Established Church. Listen to one of their leading organs.

" 'Sir Robert Peel is perfectly right in his statements,' and 'the assertions of Lords Brougham and Grey, about the favourable consequences to the Established Church, which would flow from the admission of Dissenters to the Universities, was in perfect harmony with the cunning cant of Whigism. The admission of Dissenters to University degrees would lead to the rapid overthrow of the Establishment, and that overthrow we should hail as a national blessing!'"

It is evident that Cambridge has gone as far as it can at present; and if, hereafter, it shall be able to extend its limits, the members of that enlightened body have liberality enough to do it. We shall hail every approach to a kindly feeling, but we shall never consent to the invasion of the fundamental principles of the Universities, their essential character, and ancient constitution. They are emphatically "seminaries of sound learning and religious education," and the King is bound by his oath as well as by the admitted and sacred principle of the Constitution, to see that the true doctrine of the Gospel, which is the doctrine of the Church of England, be maintained in them; and for three centuries they have been the sanctuaries and the source of pure and undefiled religion to the

* The gospel was perverted (by the *Independents* under Cromwell) to encourage plunder, persecution, and rebellion. "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood; it is better to see men wallowing in their blood than embracing idolatry and superstition," was the language of these incendiary preachers. No fewer than seven thousand clergymen were ejected from their livings! The treatment of the loyal clergy was to the last degree inhuman. Neither eminent talents, nor distinguished learning, nor exemplary virtue, could atone for fidelity to their order, and loyalty to their king. Some were actually murdered, and others perished in consequence of brutal usage, or of confinement in close and unwholesome prisons!—*Southey*.

laity and clergy of the land, and under the blessing of God, the signal means of preserving in the educated and influential classes, and through them, in the nation at large, a unity of Christian faith and practice. It has, indeed, been the glory and blessing of this country, that the clergy and laity, as they are associated in station, so are trained under the same system, and within the same walls. No one can doubt that to this cause is to be attributed, in a great degree, the absence of that infidelity which characterises the educated portion and upper classes of the laity of some other countries. It is a well-known fact, that the cabal, which was formed some years ago in a neighbouring country, on a regular and avowed system, for the destruction of Christianity, included many who stood high in the ranks of literature and science. How can this be accounted for, but on the absence of that system adopted in our Universities, and which it is now sought to invade, and ultimately to destroy? Those who seek to disturb the foundations of these venerable institutions would have Christianity no longer to form an essential part of their system of instruction and discipline. This must be the necessary result. No form of Religion could be devised that would be universally acceptable, and ultimately religion, without which science itself is laboured folly, would be banished altogether from these ancient seats of learning and piety. They would not have the Universities to make any distinction, in conferring degrees, or in admitting to their governing body, between a believer and an unbeliever. They would have the constituency of the Universities consist of a mixed body of Christians and infidels. All places of dignity and power are to be open. They would leave it to accident, whether the chancellor, high steward, professors, or other officers of the University, were of any or no faith. They would give persons of every creed, and no creed, a voice in the election of representatives, and thus deprive the Church of her only authorized organs in the House of Commons. They would cease to exact attendance at the University church, or compliance with any ordinance not purely scientific. All is to be voluntary! Alas! alas! who sees not the infatuation of entertaining such a design, and the ruinous emergencies that must attend its adoption? He is the enemy of his country who attempts it, and by a wholesome exercise of ostracism ought to be banished from its shores!

CHURCH OF IRELAND.

THE writer of the foregoing pages is quite prepared to admit, that he ought to have included the Church of Ireland in this inquiry; but he was anxious, for plain reasons, not to encumber the argument with a diversity of subjects. The present work is only intended to answer a temporary purpose. It is the writer's intention, hereafter, to enlarge and perfect his undertaking. In the mean time, it is but justice to say, that the whole of the preceding argument bears with still stronger force, on the Case of the Church of Ireland. That Church maintained its independence both as to authority and doctrine, to a much later period than the Church of England; and the writer is much mistaken, if it may not be distinctly shewn, that out of the eighteen hundred years of Christianity, Popery maintained its domination over the Church of Ireland for three centuries only! At present the writer will content himself with the following passages, verified by the author of the "Protestant Layman."

Before the 12th century, the Irish paid to the Pope—no Peter's pence—no annates—or primitiæ—nor even tithes. Their non-payment of these is, in fact, admitted in the Pope's grant of Ireland to Henry II. It is therein stipulated, that the king shall cause these imposts to be levied.

So late as the year 1134, their independence of the Papal authority is manifest from the writings of St. Bernard (*vita Malach. apud Messing. c. 6, p. 257*), who speaks in terms of great indignation against the Hibernian Church, because the Irish Bishops chose to marry, preferring the advice of St. Paul to the dogmas of the Roman Church.

The Irish were equally independent of the Roman Church in doctrine. The ancient Irish Church knew nothing of Purgatory. St. Patrick, in his work "*de Tribus Habitaculis*," which he describes as, the first, the lowermost, and the middle. The first, the kingdom of God: the lower, Hell: the middle, this present world. The first and the last receive supplies from the middle—the blessed being called to the kingdom of God—the wicked driven into eternal fire, &c.

They were ignorant of prayers for the dead: Claude, an Irish theologian, about the year 815, asserts, "whilst we are in this world, we can assist one another by prayer or counsel, but before the tribunal of Christ neither Job, nor Daniel, nor Noah, can intreat for any one, but every one must bear his own burden."

And to add no more: the Irish Church received the Sacrament in both kinds: Furseuf, an Irishman, who died in the year 648, exhorted the Irish Pastors to "strengthen the souls of the faithful, with the participation of the body and blood of Christ."

Thus, the present Church of Ireland, it might be proved, is the true Representative of the ancient Irish Church; and that the Papists, though once the usurpers of the Authority, have no more claim to its Rights and Privileges, than the disciples of Budhism or Confucius!

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